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VERNON SCANNELL

First Child

(For John and Jean Bourne)

WHAT fed their apprehension was the fears
Of loud compulsory insomnia,
Their little liberties abruptly cancelled,
The marvel of their marriage darkening
Beneath a wagging, sanitary bunting:
All these intrusions they would have to face.
But when the niggling interdicts and chill
Labours took up threatened residence
These seemed to be quite friendly after all.

What they had not prepared themselves to meet
Was this: the soft catastrophes, the sly
Menaces whose names are hard to spell
Creeping to her cot, the quiet killers
Loading their white guns and brooding over
That innocent and O, so fragile head.

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH

The Genius

DROPPED into his age, like grit into an oyster
Quartz-sharp, he cuts its soft, loose stranglehold,
And only time will soothe him into pearl,
Who, as he wounds, knows only he has failed,
For the thin coat of fame, and the dew-white skin
Both seal the lonely exile from his kin.

MAURICE CARPENTER

The Mask

TOO sensitive and clever
For this foxy world of greed
Asked a theatrical maskmaker,
"Have you what I need?"

"A mask, a mask, my master
A face of the worldly wise,
A mouth hard at the corners
And shrewd small cruel eyes."

"Make me a mask, Mr. Mask-maker,
As conventional as you can,
Let me pass in a city street
As an ordinary man."

With long and worldly fingers
The master finished his task;
No one would guess Mr. Supersensitive
Smiled through that smooth mask.

At ease among his cronies
He nursed the faith he lacked,
Said nightly "behind my poker mask
Integrity's intact."

"The bad old world like a gramophone
Playing behind closed doors
Churns the same cracked variations,
On shoddy deals and wars,"

"Yet still behind my poker mask
I keep my faith entire,
My bar-room friends will never guess
My mind's on something higher."

He died. A colleague unscrewed the mask,
Commented in surprise
When underneath he saw the face
With its shrewd small cruel eyes,

The mouth hard at the corners
Exactly like the mask,
And all that kept integrity
Corrupted in the husk.

LILITH LORRAINE

Schizophrenic

PHYSICIAN you have never seen my world,
The interlaced dimensions, the coition
Of light with granite and the flowing stone,
The crumbling guillotines of inhibition.

The bleeding heads that laugh instead of moan,
Float bodiless and mad and beautiful,
Sing with the glass-notes of an ice-blue star
Cracking the crystal chalice of the skull.

You have not seen my dark battalions rise
Against your thus-and-so, their thunders hurled
To rout reality, leaving my once-had-been
A conquered beach-head; you have not seen my world.

U.S.A.

ROBIN SKELTON

From the Artist's Roof: St. Ives 1956
(*For Ben Nicholson*)

BELOW the round and roof-swerve of the chapel
the blue and white
waters keep their counselling terms of boats,
ropes swing with scoop and lift their tethering message
to the walked walls, and the cross-hatch nets
lie like calligraphy on salts of stones.
From this roof over the town, a turning weather's
gold bird under us, the slipway roofs
edge slate light down across a hundred homes
to this statement, boats like halcyons curved
in planes and arms of walls as coarse as bread,
and to stand here is to be a setting forth
and a returning; tethered free as bird
to the inscriptive planing of its wings,
we are acknowledgment upon its changing
into voyage or haven, and our words
lie across time like lines, whose dip and lift
write testament upon all salt and bread
that we share here. While tumbler, jug and plate
upon their commonplace extend the bounds
of every watched day's knowledge into acts
of lived discovery, the signs of light
and colour move like muscles from their stiff
and separation to a natural form
companionable and strange as love, and hold
the tense and slack of all ropes against light
and reach into the mind like tides. We stand
in this occasion, roofs and greys of shape
stretching to the undirected sea,
boats curved as worlds, and know we have come back
not into artifice, but to an air

that all inscription numbers with its minds,
and, in this air above the round and swerve
of the phrased chapel and the harboured terms,
light looks at us. Light is another sentence,
and we stand spelt here into breath and space.

FLORA J. ARNSTEIN

Ballerina

OH, let the ballerina dance,
On the stilt toe,
Let hands make diagram
Of angle and poise-
Point and steeple-thrust,
And turn like a thwart windmill;

Let body bend
Like a spent wave,
And arms ebb upward,
The loving throat
Arch like a swan's prayer;

And the music prompt and lead
To new patterns of leaf on the nudging wind,
To tendrils hugging a responsive eave,
Loosen . . . ease
Like a blown feather
Slanting on levels of air,
And come to rest softly
On abandoned limbs,

Then. taking flight,
Leave the air lessened,
And the sight turned inward
To the spiral shape of remembrance.

U.S.A.

NOEL SCOTT

Nogoodboyo

HE is no longer under the table or the window
roaring a serenade,
Prone to lunge for a beer or a kiss on the balcony,
Metaphor-muzzy, simile-sick, attacked by alliteration.

His guitar is in a folk-museum, the sounds he made
Are scattered as influence over the future's poetry,
The strings are broken, the glasses smashed, the balcony
needs redecoration.

Juliet is back at the washing-up. Booze and beauty
Are again a very ordinary occupation.

Where is he now? You might ask the soil of Wales
For a secret or two. Better still, look into legend
And find him (who knows?) guzzling with goblins,
the friend
Of every nymph, the Puck of the bunch, telling tales
About glare and gloom and glory, such as they were
when he lay,
Alone at last in the hospital one white November day.

JAMES TURNER

Summer Day

LIE here in the sharp grass
And overlook the fern-tongued cliff,
The mauve rock downfalling
To the summer sea, the deep rift
Of the mouth of caves.

Lie here in the spear grass
With the cliffs tilting
To the shore, above calm sea-pools
The cave mouths and seeded beach.

Lie here. The sea is level now
With the sun trapped in
Anemone ponds and noon
Echoed in delphic caverns.

Lie with the sorrow of drowned
Men's voices from the throat
Of the cormorant, the diver, shag
And hard-beaked gull.
O gracious tern, yours is the cry
Of ladies who wept,
Drinking the sea's death.

Lie here in the sharp grass
Under a lark-filled sky.

JOHN WILLIAMSON

Prophet

A DARK seed quickening among voices,
A man who listens intently in conversation,
His brain gone, haunted with voices,
Sunrising among his people in the night, dark
In the disorderly sleep of his country;
A page of conundrums, bright eyes,
Come to this high glum wilderness
To wander, to shout in the dark and fumble
For his soul, at bay, growling in thorns,
Thrown and trampled, burning and burning,
Become a giant, brandishing trees,
Still in the morning, with a voice.

DOROTHY STRINGER

The Nun

THIS is a living etching. Here the line
Is everything. Colour is sacrificed
To discipline of art. See how the folds
Of veil and scapular black-chiselled fall;
How the white coif confines the downcast face
In its stiff drama. Missal and hanging cross
Are beads of history, words in a poem
Flicking the mind to life. Now, as she walks,
The heavy skirt swings as a censer. Strange
That clothes so starkly functional should speak
Of death and life, eternity and change.

JOHN SMITH

Tenderly at Last

TENDERLY at last, O tenderly
Love is expressed;
No longer the mythological cries
Great weepings, hair distressed.
Tenderly at last, O tenderly
Lies the head on the breast

Tenderly at last, O tenderly
The kiss is given;
No longer the furious engines of the blood
By passion's fire are driven.
Tenderly at last, O tenderly
Is the heart shriven.

RICHARD A. GEORGE

Knossos

MOVE back the centuries, Minos priest and king
Emerges through the myth and lustral well
In golden mask elaborate and royal,
Bull-throned and flanked by frescoes of his realm.

Here where the polished benches wait and wait,
We too are drawn to watch the empty throne,
Half-hoping that his flesh will quicken there,
His presence glitter through the little room.

But reconstruction cannot capture time
And filtered light reveals the peeling paint;
The mood is gone, we hurry from the gloom
And stand eye-dazzled in the brilliant light.

This is the same. The white-glare and the heat,
The scraggy hills, the jagged rocks and trees,
The joyous vines entwining happy hearts
That loved gay laughter and the crested seas.

Pounding the stones, the rippling bull would pause,
Red-eyeing nimble boys and naked girls,
Waiting the moment in perfected skill
When sacred somersault would kiss his form.

The labyrinth of Theseus threads its way,
The painted hero leaves the red-black cup
Through maze of corridors and tunnelled gloom,
Unravelling legend into truth and fact.

The centuries turn, the wind screams from the south,
A wind fed full by flame and falling sword;
The ruins sob with suddenness of death,
Still hold the anguish of a broken world.

U.S.A.

RAYMOND WILSON

A Broken Watch

A BROKEN watch in an empty drawer; a room
Airless, knee-deep in junk that once belonged
God knows how long ago to godknows whom,
The mouse-dirt brittle like hard seeds of grass.
Eternity is time that does not pass.

Suppose the universe a cuckoo clock
(Aquinas prompts the image) geared so that
A slow millenium hangs 'twixt tick and tock.
When the sharp beak strikes mountain flat with sea
Eternity's still time about to be.

The paradox resolves no further than
A childhood since of moments whole as life,
When white eternities' quicksilver ran
Torrential in the bud and the green shoot,
Between time run to seed and its dead root.

LOUIS GINSBERG

Earth and Man

BLOSSOMS from branches
Climb from the bark,
Translated from secrets
Hid in the dark.

A brooklet can juggle
From earth and pebbles
Melodies linked
And rippling in trebles.

So man, like the loam,
  Seeks colours and tones,
With rills in him running
  Near long, white bones.

Earth reaches through branches
  To petals and birds—
Earth breaks into blossoms;
  Man, into words.

U.S.A.

PAUL CASIMIR

Adam in Luck

(For Maurice Carpenter)

AT twilight I found you in the ripening sun,
Drinking the great cider-cup of the sun,
Till the world danced through your body,
And lay a golden pupil in your eye.
Already it was autumn and the latest verses
Fell through your fingers as leaves from a tree;
Smiling, you took the last drop, then told
How the world was made in a Dionysian frenzy,
And how at the tree Eve fell and the apple
Danced in her belly for love of Adam and sun.
To-morrow it would be different.
You had not run
The rage of shadow to die and carry only a stone.
Smiling, you prophesied how suddenly trees
Would break ribald through each cottage window,
Apples ride high on each bridal bed and these
Moments of heady laughter leave all darkness withered.
This you promised to Adam in luck and the sun.

PHILIP GARDNER

Amends to Millom

(To Norman & Yvonne Nicholson)

THAT day, across an estuary dark and bristling,
Only the foundry broke the October gloom,
Seeming to warn me off, to write in smoke
This was no place for visitors. Black Combe,
A hawk of rock, hooded in dirty mist
Pondered to loose its rain on the crouching town.
I came a stranger into Sunday streets,
Finding my way in silence, taking in
The brown spire, houses crowding up the hill,
Closed corner shops, names familiar from books,
Judging the town by sight and abstract shape,
—And from the desolation of the square
When the last bus departed, three strokes dropped
Into the silence from the market-clock,
The dead centre of a provincial afternoon.
Down by the ironworks a row of houses
Faced a cold blast straight off the Irish Sea,
That bent the scant trees back, to snap their spines,
And shaved the slagbank's top flat as a ruler.
Coal-trucks clanked in sidings; broken boilers
Rusted in grass, like giants' cast-off toys;
Red smoke of chemicals blew across the marsh;
Children tobogganed down screes of slag.

Put-off by sight, the mute appearances
Of industry and empty streets, the cloak
Of mist and smoke, the mountains dull as iron,
I wrote this down no place for life, then walked,
With grimy men returning from their shift
In grey drizzle, on bikes swayed by the wind,

Back to the first-class comfort of the train;
But always glanced behind, as it sped homewards,
At the dark-swallowed town, the stoked-up furnaces,
Wondering what side I might have missed.

And I came back, in sunlight, less a stranger,
Knowing a welcome waited behind one door.
The train doubled the waterhead; I saw
The stone-strewn foothills in new-year clarity,
And drew with a light heart towards the platform.
Sun sparkled on the market-clock's thin dome,
Flashed on the banks' brass plates, the windows
Of library, school and bus-shelter, scrubbed with light
Tombstones sprouting white in the slanting churchyard,
And warmed the iron of roundabout and swings
In the small children's park. Black Combe rose up
Soft as a sand-dune, gentle behind the town,
Into blue sky where one lone wisp of cloud
Drifted, a brown balloon. The windy tide
Slapped the piled boulders of the sea-wall, rough as ore,
and fishing-boats
Rocked on the swell like gulls. Far over the water,
Chimneys and shipyard gantries smudged the haze.
The hovering sun laid down a road of gold
Across the trembling distances of sea,
And held within its view the town complete:
Patched, concrete houses cracked by shock; the church,
Poking an inch of spire above the fields' half-moon;
A slow stream winding across the sunken marsh;
The old sea-wall, fractured like Jericho,
Sliding on both sides to its vanished centre,
Two ships of stone frozenly dipping to meet
A lunging wave of sand; the lonely mines,
Lifting the tripods of their winding-gear;
The grid of streets flanking the station, bare trees
Waving high-cradled nests of rooks; the ironworks,

Forging the solid foundations of the town.
Today the streets could speak; live words of friendship
Guiding my footsteps, talking, fire-snug, at tea,
Furnished the meanings hidden behind blank doors.
Buildings' biographies rolled from a human tongue.
I saw love was a habit of the heart,
Not eyes' aesthetic choice; the setting changed
From brick and smoke into a people's home.
I left in night; but, satisfied at last,
Needed no backward peering from the train.
I understood their life, I shared their love;
—The same stars look on their home as on mine.

CARLA LANYON LANYON

To My Godson

MY infant godson, I would teach you other things
Besides the Lord's Prayer in the vulgar tongue,
To learn along the years that lead to manhood,
Small lowly lessons, the unvirile virtues.
So now I wish you only humility.

May you hear sometimes, in those unrecorded hours
Between midnight and morning, when old men die
And young men dance and babes whimper for the breast,
Hear the pity-filled laughter of angels
For all that masculine magnificence, the pomp
Of epaulets and orders, mitre, gown and wig
To clothe the uncertain, shivering naked form
Of man, proud man.

Choose humility, choose it if you dare
To stand without the fancy-dress support
Of platform dignity, cocked-hat importance.
Now you have two short names, titles enough
To serve your God with, and to love your neighbour.
May you live long in meekness, unrewarded,
And may there be no obituaries at your death.

ALAN CHAMBERS

The Front — West Kirby

(for Robin Skelton)

DROWSING I see
The sea slide in
And slap the wall
With lunar mechanism.
The boats sail
Through the worried frown
That the wind has fretted
On the sea's sun-freckled face.

The Earth spins within my head.
The Moon's grave pull
Draws back the waters
From the sucking sand
Revealing a shining ridge-ribbed surface.
The boats settle.
Their keels slice in
And their tired thwarts
Lean over, cushioned by the sand.

Sleep furls my brain.
Against the water's edge,
That rushes away from the children
And the cars upon the concrete promenade,
The birds are feeding
Probing the latest tide lines
Before their dinner digs too deep.
The Sea Pie, black and white
Like a checker duster
Stabs his orange bill
Then cocks his eye
With greedy satisfaction.

Out of the corner of my eye
The sands dry out.
But down below
The salt still oozes
And damply snug
The cockled creatures
Perform their primal secrets
Safe from destructive penetration.
In the back of my mind
A tide turns
And the dry islands
Give themselves a shake
Before they snuggle into
The returning waters.
The anchors lurch
Deeper into the sand
As the boats heave themselves
Onto the shoulders
Of the muscle rippling sea.
The birds retire
To the eternal modesty
Of their prim sandbank
And the concrete rampart
Dissolves into
An occasional lash of spray.

I open my eyes
And a sad mist
Covers a flat sea
In a drab haze.

REVIEWS

Reading a Medal: Terence Tiller (Hogarth Press, 10s. 6d.).
The Marches: Cid Corman (Migrant Books, Worcester, 5s.).
Once More to Tourney: Ewart Milne (Linden Press, 7s. 6d.).
Young Malatesta: Horatio Colony (Richard R. Smith, $2.50).

CAN there be two poets farther apart in technique and outlook than Terence Tiller and Cid Corman? They are like the two sides of the medal in Tiller's title poem, facing different ways, yet cast of the same metal. Each perceives his own true horizon, and back to back they defend Poetry from the law-makers, from the whims of fashion, from each other.

Tiller was never a prolific poet, and it is many years since his last collection appeared, but this new one was worth the wait. It is a rare pleasure to find so sure an ear allied to so eclectic a sense of resources. Tiller is now a mature craftsman who knows exactly how far he can bend the rules by which he chooses to work, and when to employ a striking image:

> "Cold like a gnat's voice, a taut wire:"
> (*Winter Elegy*)

The intricate development of a poem like *The Planets,* with its varied repetitions of end-words changing position in each stanza, points the case for an ordered consciousness: the poet is in control by virtue of the disciplines he imposes on himself.

Corman is content to modulate his lines to the barest of statements in attempting to catch facets of human experience. His economy creates its own prosody, and sometimes achieves an intimate immediacy. That is its virtue and strength, an effect. As a working basis it is as limited as any of the devices it scorns. When any device, form, or theory, sucks the blood from the very ideas it presumes to present, it is time to relegate it, for use when needed, with the other available tools of the trade. If the ideas themselves are anaemic, no theory can transform them to more than poetic journalese. Two or three of these poems do succeed in presenting ephemeral aspects of reality in an oblique, compelling way. The others are derivative (Williams, Cummings . . .), or simply flat. The booklet contains three designs by Edwina Curtis which remind one of Roualt, Gorgonzola, and Rorschach, all at once.

Fable: an Irishman gathered his wild oats and boiled them

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in blarney, with salt to please the Scots, sugar to please the English, and sour grapes because he was Irish; but it still became porridge, and lumpy at that. Milne's collected light verse offers a noisy hotch-potch, with too much slapdashery, (we gather that copulation is Good Fun),some not worth yawning at. I wish there were more pieces as good as the *Apology for an Omission*—a satirical direct hit on *not* having written a Chinese poem:

> "Please. Everybody. Forgive. Unworthy.
> Mr. Pound, forgive me. Flower of Jasmin, intercede for me.
> Doting mother of a Thousand Silver Elephants, pray for me.
> Pray. Intercede. Forgive. (Mr. Whaley, weep for me)."

Young Malatesta is a blank verse narrative loosely based on the love of Paolo and Francesca. Colony introduces a younger brother of *voyeur* tendencies, but in spite of occasional use of slang the over-dignified language invalidates whatever freshness his ideas may have possessed.

W. PRICE TURNER.

Peninsula, an anthology of verse from the West Country, edited by Charles Causley (MacDonald, 10s. 6d.).
First Anthology 1956 (The Poetry Society of Australia): edited by Wesley Milgate and Imogen Whyse.
Exile: edited by D. V. Smith (Villiers Publications, 14s.).

THE fascinating West Country collection, including work by Eden Phillpotts (b. 1862) and Patrick Garland (b. 1935), is bound to be vastly attractive to those whose reading of poetry is confined in the main to anthologies; for its list of well-known names from J. C. Powys and Siegfried Sassoon to C. Day Lewis and George Barker reveals connections with most aspects of English verse over the last fifty or sixty years. It is pleasant to find here such an unduly neglected poet as Ronald Bottrall (whose *In Philistia* is the complete apology for the so-called "private verse" which caused adverse comment in the Thirties). It is true that a few of the contacts with the West Country are somewhat flimsy, but any excuse will serve if it brings more poetry in front of the

reluctant public. "The lanes of thought", as Roger Kidd remarks, "spread through uneven country". Particularly heartening is the inclusion of pieces by Maurice Carpenter, Paul Casimir, James S. Constant, Gordon Harris, Norman Harvey, Derek Parker, and Leslie Norris, all of whom are not yet as well known as they deserve to be.

For most people the Australian anthology will provide a new gallery of names. So much the better: the poems then can be valued for their own sake. Most of them show no indication of their country of origin. There is the usual diffident parade of a shy sensibility, in language not sufficiently deeply-bitten. The men are more forthright and decisive than the women: and all are just a little too obvious. Worth attention are Charles Higham, Brian Maltby—

> "It is not enough
> merely to occupy another place"—

Duncan Miller (though he appears to need and use too many words), and Helen Reid: and possibly a motto for the collection may be taken from Peter Hopegood's *The Shoals Come In* —

> "Hoard inexhaustible, coined to be lavished,
> Recklessly squandered..."

Mr. D. V. Smith, editing *Olivant* from Route 4, Box 186, Fitzgerald, Georgia, invites contributions to this new non-profit-making independent magazine. The first issue, of 246 pages, contains a storming essay by Harry Hooton, more or less on the theme that man has never been without a master and has never been the master; some short stories demonstrating the oddly-mixed influences of Henry Miller, William Saroyan, Norman Mailer, and Micky Spillane; a large number of poems (over 150 pages); six photographs of Seymour Gresser's sculpture, eight of paintings by Polia Pillin, and two of illustrations by Miru; and five critical articles of varying merit. In sum, quite a compendium. The poems include several already published here by Villiers in *Eight American Poets* (reviewed in *Outposts* 24). The most interesting in structure and content are those by Kitasono Katue, Hyacinthe Hill—

> "Beast of the innocent eye, I offer you
> the jewelled blossoms of my humanity,"—

Chris Bjerknes, K. L. Beaudoin, and Felix Stefanile. James Boyer May's translations of Phivos Delphis, and pieces by George P. Elliott, Harold Witt, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and others, are also worth honourable mention. Indeed, very few poems fall below a reasonably intelligent standard. It is hoped that this comment will encourage some English poets to go marching through Georgia.

HUGH CREIGHTON HILL.

Excursus in Autumn: John Smith (Hutchinson, 12s. 6d.).
The Green Heart: Brenda Chamberlain (O.U.P., 12s. 6d.).

FIRST reaction to John Smith's *Excursus in Autumn* is to feel that there are too many poems here that fall below the standard he sets. The reaction is not entirely a false one, for Mr. Smith's sensitivity is his strongest asset and, deeply moving in at least a dozen of these poems, reason enough for the reader to befriend him too quickly, unaware of less potent gifts. Caught up in his problems, however, the achievement is valuable. There is no blatant attack, no angry refusal, admission, or super despair, but sincere experience and interpretation. He moves against his problems, personal or everyday, without falling over himself to tell us too many why's, anxious that we should share them in his own voice. We do—

> "On summer days
> Unnoticeably the wind revives, but not her breath.
> Enshrined in infinite calm on the white bed
> She lies so quiet; she cannot come to harm."

We leave them, too, to find a sharper side where directness and simplicity are forsaken for a more searching tussle with intricacies which are probably self-made. Mr. Smith is a truer poet when allowing things to happen to him. Experiences that are not wholly his seem to have made this a worthwhile rather than important selection.

It is the first reaction to Brenda Chamberlain's *The Green Heart* which sets the seal. Her poetry is of a place and its people. It says a lot about both—and Wales and the Welsh are proved a profitable experience. Miss Chamberlain is, however, a painter

turned poet, and pictures, colour, landscapes, and texture are closer and more technically mature than the emotions below the surface. The voice, nevertheless, is appreciative and it would be unfair to ask for more.

BRIAN PARVIN.

Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins, edited by C. C. Abbott. Second Edition, revised and enlarged (O.U.P. 50s.).

THE new Frontispiece, a photograph from the '50s, shows the poet with bobbed hair, pen on paper. And the two other new illustrations are photographs of Manley his father, a friend of Hood's, and of his mother Catherine, who died in 1920 in her hundredth year.

The important additional letters belong to the family group which, with one exception, now range from Hopkins's first term at Balliol, April 1863, to May 1889, four weeks before his death. In sharp contrast with the blissful, exuberant tone of the Freshman is the painful exchange between Hopkins and his parents in October, 1866, the month he was received into the Church of Rome. Thereafter, across the rift between them, the letters are bridges various in shape and traffic. "No one knows where you may break out next," one of his Superiors said to him. "If you know anything good about strikes and depression in trade or of Russian aggression I should like to see it," he wrote in 1878 to his mother, who over the years supplied him with magazines and clippings.

There are other letters on the wreck of the *Deutschland:* "It made a deep impression on me, more than any wreck or accident I ever read of." A new note gives lengthy extracts from accounts in *The Times* and *Illustrated London News.* It was with no uncritical eye that he entered on St. Beuno's (1874-77), where, he tells his father, the gardens include "flights of steps seemingly up to heaven lined with burning aspiration upon aspiration of scarlet geraniums". The letters from Dublin are often heavy with frustration, he and his Society holding opposite views over Irish politics—"I have always looked on myself as part Welsh"; of one Breakspear, "he cannot say a plain thing in a plain way (I believe musical people never can)"; "I kept the strict Lent . . . my cheeks like two harp-frames";

"Yesterday I bathed in St. Winefred's Well" (Boxing Day 1879); of *Alice in Wonderland,* "a book I never admired . . . I hold it is not funny"; such are the things that lie on every page.

Finally, momentously, appear revealing extracts from the Notes (in the Bodleian) kept by him during two retreats—the nearest we have so far come to the Spiritual Diaries.

TERENCE HEYWOOD.

Lightfall: J. Phoenice (Guild Press, 3s. 6d.).
Imperishable Gene: Ruth Forbes Sherry (Outposts Publications & Hennypenny Press, U.S.A. 5s.).
The Healing Green: David Newall (Armaus, Luton).
Stepping-Stones: Edward Morgan (Outposts Pubications, 2s. 6d.).

J. PHOENICE is a prolific writer who feels the harmony of all things: these poems are full of warmth and vitality. Their compassion is not sentimental and sad or celebrating; they present ideas in a lyrical way. She writes chiefly of the country, with imagery usually fresh and often arresting. Although she is capable of admirable compression, she rather tends to overpower her initial idea with a profusion of associative verbiage, to the detriment of clarity. She is most successful when imagination bows to the demands of a stricter or sparer form than she usually chooses, as in *On a Mouse Dead in a Bottle* and *Fountain.* Her ability to communicate the surge of an enthusiasm must be commended, but she should guard against the charm of her own facility.

Ruth Forbes Sherry is an impersonal, contemplative poet, who finds her themes in the great immeasurables, and courts them with lyric economy and machine-age imagery:

> "Flying electrons click dimension of mystery"
> (*Poem for this Day*)

If one grows a little weary of her use of technical terms, it is because words like *geode* and *metate* are too stiff and flat to function beyond their practical meanings, and induce *rigor mortis* in the context. The exception to this rule is her *Poem for the Geophysical Year,* where the jargon is used to good effect, to posit the plight of man, the measurer. She has talent for definition and analysis

rather than creation by synthesis. This collection maintains a unity of restraint through a variety of forms.

David Newall's poems possess artless sincerity. Although innocent of any technique beyond a sparing use of rhyme, his themes are carefully resolved, without emotional excesses, and there is occasional happy phrasing. *The Past* is an uncut diamond:

> "The Past burns a hole in my pocket.
> I spend time on time spent.
> Minutes jut out of the hours
> gone by and splinter the present."

Some attention to rhythm or form would earn this poet a wider range of readers.

Edward Morgan is more ambitious, but less successful. Grand language needs grand skill to back it up. In the 54 lines of *Midsummer's Height* the three rhymes bunched together grate like a broken bone in the loose fat of declamatory prose. When he submits to regular rhyme, forced rhythms buckle his train of thought completely off the track. Only a few gleams of fresh perception keep his work from being tedious.

ANNE TURNER.

NOTICES

POEMS INVITED. It is now 18 months since we first informed readers that the Editor of *Outposts* had been given the task of selecting poems for a national magazine experimenting with the publication of poetry. Since that time nearly 100 poems have been placed through this channel, and payment has been at the rate of 10 guineas per poem. We are glad to say that the experiment has proved such a success that not only is the series of lyrical poems to be continued, but a second feature of light and humorous poetry has been commenced, on the same generous terms. Contributions are invited. Lyrical poems (having a direct impact upon the reader) and light and humorous poems should be sent, together with stamped addressed envelope, to Howard Sergeant at the *Outposts* address. Length not more than 20 lines.

OUTPOSTS PUBLICATIONS. The latest additions to the *Outposts* series of poetry booklets are *Stepping-Stones* by Edward Morgan, *Perchance Towards Grace* by A. Ritchie Stewart, and *The Camp Site* by Gideon Clark (the second collection by this poet to appear in this series).

POETRY AWARDS. Readers are reminded that Howard Sergeant is British Commonwealth Editor on the Editorial Board of the American organisation, BORESTONE MOUNTAIN POETRY AWARDS. It is his responsibility to cover all the magazines published throughout the British Commonwealth and to select the best poems for the consideration of the Board as a whole. In order to perform this task as thoroughly as possible, he invited readers to co-operate by drawing his attention to outstanding poems and to inform him of the appearance of any new magazines which publish poetry. There are valuable prizes for the best three poems, and a selection of the remainder will be published in the annual anthology sponsored by the organisation, which included a section for undergraduate poetry.

COPIES of *The Headlands,* poems by Howard Sergeant, are still available at 7s. 6d. from Putnam & Co. Ltd.—"Those who despair of the aims and values of modern poetry should ponder Mr. Sergeant and think again." (*Contemporary Review*).